

History of Everetts Baptist Church

by
Helen K. Peel

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History of Everetts Baptist Church

1877 - 1974



by

Helen K. Peel

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825-916 Author

Dedicated
to my grandparents

Charles Thomas and Willie Speight Peal in memory
of their steadfast love of God and faithful service to their
church.

“Well done thou good and faithful servant; thou hast
been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over
many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” Matthew
25:21.

PREFACE

Writing this history of the Everetts Baptist Church has been a labor of love for my church and for its members both past, present, and future. The inspiration to undertake this task came to me sometime in 1971. The one hundredth anniversary of the founding of our church was approaching. I realized that much of the history of our church was known only to our older members and would eventually be lost to us. What began as a seemingly simple task became a three year project of research and inquiry.

As I began to look for old records and ask questions of older members, I realized that our church has practically no records that are available to its members. With a keen interest in history, I resolved to accept my own challenge to record in one book whatever information I could find before some of these facts are lost forever. There are no minutes of our church before 1935 and they are very incomplete since then. Our membership roll was transferred to a new book in 1942, and the old books cannot be found.

Without the various associational minutes, the archives of the Biblical Recorder and The Enterprise, the Martin County Register of Deeds Office, and the individual histories written of North Carolina Baptists, the task would have been almost impossible.

I have tried to make this history as complete and accurate as possible, using the information available. To the best of my ability, I have exhausted every source of information that was brought to my attention. I have gone into detail to use dates, figures and names of people because we have so few records to leave to those who will come after us. It is hoped that this history will be useful as a reference from time to time in the future. There were probably many

active leaders in the church through the years that have not been mentioned. It was not intentional to leave them out; but, with scanty records, it was only possible to use those names that could be found recorded or those that were told about to the writer. It was not intentional to leave out any person who has been a leader, at any time, in the church.

I am convinced that the ancestors of many of our members were Primitive Baptists; therefore, at the urging of my son, I included at the beginning of this work a brief history of the Kehukee Association. I have also included a few facts about the Missionary Baptist Associations of which our church has been a member in the past. Finally, I have included in the appendix a list of our pastors, deacons, clerks, treasurers, Sunday school superintendents (so far as I could determine from the records available), and a roll of our current membership.

Some interesting and valuable information was gathered from some of the elderly people in our community. I want particularly to thank Mrs. Fannie James, Mrs. Effie Mallory, Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Clark, Mrs. Lula Wynn and Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Forbes Sr. for their time and patience in answering my questions. Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Mobley were also very helpful in providing information and making suggestions. Mrs. Fannie James passed away April 4, 1974, a few weeks before this book went to press.

The research at the North Carolina Baptist Historical Collection in the Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University could not have been accomplished without the help of Mrs. Edith A. Tarkington. I also want to thank her for her invaluable assistance in proof-reading these pages before they were turned over to the printer.

I want to thank Mr. Frances Manning for the use of his semi-retirement office which was at my disposal at any time. The hours I spent researching old copies of The

Enterprise from 1902 through 1935 were very pleasant. I also appreciate his encouragement and personal interest in this project.

I want to thank Rev. John A. Moore, Associational Missionary of the South Roanoke Baptist Association, for his advice and helpful suggestions in compiling the information I had gathered, and especially for editing the chapter on early Baptist history.

I would like to express my appreciation to former pastors J. H. Smith, E. Cleve Wilkie, John H. Tullock, and Paul T. Worrell for their letters to me in which they shared some of their recollections of the years they were pastor of our church.

I want to thank my son, Dr. Jesse R. Peel, of Nashville, Tennessee, for the encouragement he gave me while working on this project, for his suggestions in outlining the book and most especially for editing the finished manuscript.

Finally, I wish to thank my husband, J. Woolard Peel, for his help and suggestions, and for his patience and understanding as I spent so many hours gathering and organizing this material. Without the help and support of these, my family and friends, this project might never have been completed.

Helen K. Peel

Everetts, North Carolina
April, 1974

Chapter I

EARLY BAPTISTS ASSOCIATIONS

Kehukee Baptist Association

Baptist work in America began in New England, since they were the first Colonists to arrive here. Baptists were persecuted because they insisted upon the individual believer's baptism, upon worshipping in their own way, and upon the separation of church and state. The first Baptist church in America was established in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1639, by Roger Williams after he was banished from the Boston Colony. With further colonization Baptist churches spread throughout New England, and into Pennsylvania, Virginia and the Carolinas.

The first Baptist Association formed in America was the Philadelphia in 1707; the second was the Charleston formed in 1751; and third was the Sandy Creek (Randolph County) formed in 1758. The Kehukee Baptist Association was formed in 1765 of churches in Eastern North Carolina, and was the fourth in America.

There were Baptists in eastern North Carolina before the Kehukee Association was formed. According to M. A. Huggins' *A History of North Carolina Baptists 1727-1832*, the first Baptist churches in North Carolina came into being as a result of the early settlers moving down from Virginia. They established the first one in the Colony in 1727 and named it Chowan. The oldest Baptist church in North Carolina still in existence is the Shiloh Church in Camden County, which was established in 1729. These first churches, including those in the Kehukee Association, were established by evangelists, or itinerant preachers, who were interested in saving souls and establishing new

churches. The Kehukee Association grew for over half a century in number of baptized believers and in new churches being formed. This growth came about because of the definite missionary outlook during these years.

According to C. B. and Sylvester Hassell's History Of The Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association, the Kehukee Association had its beginning at a meeting-house called "Kehukee" situated near Kehukee Creek in Halifax County and consisted of seven churches: Toisnot and Falls of Tar River in Edgecombe County; Kehukee and Fishing Creek in Halifax County; Sandy Creek in Warren County; Sandy Run in Bertie County; and a church in Camden County. Following the organization of the Kehukee Association, there were six Baptist churches established in Martin County: Skewarky in 1785; Conoho in 1794; Smithwick's Creek in 1803 or 1804; Spring Green in 1811; Picot in 1827; and Bear Grass in 1829. The Picot Church later became part of the Jamesville Church and the name Picot was dropped.

So many churches were organized in the Kehukee that new associations had to be formed from time to time. From this growth, we must assume that the Kehukee Association had a missionary outlook during these years. This growth continued despite the dissensions which had begun to develop in the churches because of different doctrinal beliefs. A real conflict began in the association in 1807 and continued for twenty years until 1827.

According to George W. Paschal's History of North Carolina Baptists, in 1803 Elder Martin Ross, a prominent minister of Martin County, had introduced a query before the associational meeting at Conoho Log Chapel in October on the subject of Missions: "Is not the Kehukee Association, with all her numerous and respectable friends, called on in Providence, in some way, to step forward in

support of that missionary spirit which the great God is so wonderfully reviving amongst the different denominations of good men in various parts of the world?"

"In this query Ross had sounded the first trumpet call of North Carolina Baptists to the work of missions. It sent not peace upon the Baptists of the Kehukee Association but a sword. The purpose of Ross was to evangelize the heathen, whether in America or elsewhere." It was during this time that Luther Rice was making appeals to the Baptist churches to support Adoniram and Anne Judson in their missionary endeavors in Burma. The subject of missions brought great controversy to the churches during these twenty years. During this period the association was under the guidance of Elder Joseph Biggs, of Williamston, pastor of the church at Skewarky. Some rejected the new idea, but others were in favor of spreading the gospel all over the world. In 1804 the association voted to support the missionary cause. The Baptist Philanthropic Society was organized and the churches made arrangements to contribute to missions.

In 1827 the anti-missionary segment had grown stronger, and at the associational meeting at Kehukee Church, a declaration of Principles was submitted and adopted. Hassell's History records: "It was agreed that we discard all Missionary Societies, Bible Societies and Theological Seminaries, and the practices heretofore resorted to for their support, in begging money from the public; and if any person should be among us, as agents of any of said societies, we hereafter discountenance them in these practices; and if under a character of a minister of the gospel, we will not invite them into our pulpits; believing these societies and institutions to be the inventions of men, and not warranted from the word of God. We further do unanimously agree that should any of the members of our

churches join the fraternity of Masons, or, being members, continue to visit the lodges and parades, we will not invite them to preach in our pulpits, believing them to be guilty of such practices; and we declare non-fellowship with them and such practices altogether.”

The Neuse Association which overlapped with the Kehukee voted in 1829 to be missionary and to cease correspondence with the Kehukee. At the same session they voted to divide and formed the Toisnot Association, which changed its name to Contentnea in 1830, and became Primitive Baptist. Some of the churches that formed the Tar River Association in 1831 came from the Neuse Association. But their vote to “suspend correspondence” was the result of the action by the Kehukee Association in 1827.

From the minutes of the Neuse Association for 1829, page 5: “Whereas the Kehukee Association hath declared non-fellowship with Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Missionary Societies, and Theological Seminaries, and those who encourage them: we feel it necessary to hesitate, to question, to examine, and are constrained to think it our duty to God, to ourselves, and to posterity to suspend our correspondence with that body, praying that God may over rule and influence us in all truth, and restore us to a happy correspondence on Christian and Bible Principles.”

Tar River Baptist Association

The final split between the missionary and anti-missionary came at the Kehukee associational meeting in 1831 at Flat Swamp. Nine churches petitioned for letters of dismissal from the association. Two of the churches went back later, but the other seven organized the Tar River Association that same year. None of these churches was located in Martin County. Since this split in 1831, the Kehukee Association has been known as Primitive Baptists,

the name they preferred to be known by and which originated with them.

The Tar River Association was the grandmother of our present association, and it was the association which our own church joined soon after our beginning. It was organized because of a need for a mission minded association in this area after the split with the Kehukee. The nine churches which had asked for letters of dismission from the Kehukee in October 1831, joined with four other churches from the Raleigh Association, and these thirteen churches constituted the Tar River Association. They embraced the counties of Franklin, Warren, Vance and Nash and churches in other counties in the east. The first annual session was held at Sandy Creek, in Franklin County, in October 1831. No record was found of the membership at that time. According to L. Grady Burgiss's *A History Of The Roanoke Baptist Association*, the association had grown to twenty churches in 1850 with a membership of 1,297, and by 1870 there were twenty-seven churches with a membership of 2,823. In 1878, with thirty-five churches in the association, a great Associational Missions Program was launched. This vigorous program was continued for about thirty years and by 1907 the number of churches had increased to one hundred, with a total membership of 11,006.

At the 77th annual session, which was held with the Henderson Church on October 7-9, 1907, according to Dr. Thomas J. Taylor's *A History of the Tar River Baptist Association*, "the necessity for dividing the association became so apparent that a committee was appointed to arrange for the division. The committee recommended that the Atlantic Coast Line Railway be the general line of division and the report was adopted. Under this arrangement forty-nine churches procured letters of dismission, and at an early date organized the Roanoke Association."

Roanoke Baptist Association

Many of the older members of our congregation will remember when our church was a part of the Roanoke Association.

An organizational meeting of the Roanoke Association was held at the Enfield church on March 28, 1908. The first annual session was held with the Rocky Mount church on Tuesday night, October 13, 1908, and our church sent one delegate.

The Roanoke Association grew rapidly from 1908 to 1918 through the emphasis of associational missions. According to the records, there seems to have been a lag in growth between the First and Second World Wars. During the time of the Second World War, progress went forward again with more baptisms, new churches being organized, and a large increase in total offerings. By 1954 the association had grown to ninety-four churches with a membership of 28,199 members. The body again saw the necessity to divide and voted to do so. The Roanoke was divided into the North Roanoke with forty-nine churches and South Roanoke with forty-five churches.

The first annual session of the South Roanoke was held in Robersonville on October 12, 1955. Rev. and Mrs. John Tullock, Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Forbes, Sr., Mrs. W. S. Bailey and Mrs. C. C. Bailey were delegates from our church.

These brief facts bring the history of our former associations down to our own organization, the South Roanoke Baptist Association.

Baptist State Convention

A resolution calling for the organization of a Baptist State Convention was introduced by Elder Martin Ross, of Martin County, at the annual session of the Chowan

Association in 1826. He was appointed chairman of a committee to effect such an organization, but he died a few months later before his task was completed. Elder Ross had introduced the query before the Kehukee Association on the subject of missions in 1803, and in 1805 he had helped organize the Philanthropic Baptist Missionary Society of North Carolina. So we see, the beginning of the great missions effort and our State Convention are attributed to him. Others finished the work he had begun. Thomas Meredith, founder of the Biblical Recorder, with thirteen other leaders met in Greenville on March 26, 1830, and organized the State Baptist Convention. The delegates were from Chowan, Cumberland, Edgecombe, Perquimans, Pitt and Wake Counties.

In 1845 a Western Carolina Convention was organized. In 1897 the existing conventions agreed that the Baptist cause could be better served if they all merged into one state convention. As a result, all North Carolina Baptists have been united in one convention since 1898.

Chapter II

THOSE ITINERANT EVANGELISTS

The minutes of the South Roanoke Association indicate that the Everetts Baptist Church is the fourth oldest Missionary Baptist Church in Martin County. Cedar Branch was organized in 1851; Williamston Memorial in 1870; Hamilton in 1876; and Everetts in 1877. We recognize that Cedar Branch was organized before the Civil War and the other three during the Reconstruction Days after the War.

The churches in Williamston, Hamilton and Everetts seem closely tied together in their beginnings. According to Harry Biggs' History Of the Memorial Baptist Church in Williamston, "Mrs. Dennis Simmons and an invalid lady made an effort to establish a Baptist Church in Williamston. They wrote to the Baptist State Mission Board asking for help. In 1870 the Reverends Pittman and Powell were sent there to hold a series of meetings. Those who joined the church during this meeting were the original members. The erection of a church building was not begun until 1876 and was not completed until several years later."

In Paul Bailey's History of Everetts Baptist Church, written in 1935, he acknowledges appreciation for information furnished to him by Mr. George H. Holliday and Mr. Drew Mobley: "The Everetts Baptist Church had its beginning a few years after the Civil War in the year 1877. A Missionary Baptist preacher by the name of Powell came to Cross Roads Christian Church and asked permission to preach, same being granted and a brief meeting was held. In the Fall of 1877, Mr. Powell returned with a helper in the great work of the Master. Mr. Pittman, his associate, was also a preacher. A revival meeting was begun in an old

school building near Mr. Bryant Wynne's home. The meeting was held in the school building until school began, after which they moved to an old field nearby, and pine saplings were cut and used in making benches for the congregation to sit on, and the meeting continued for about three weeks." As an illustration of the handicaps under which these men labored—the lights used were provided by burning lightwood torches.

Further information was learned about the preachers Powell and Pittman when Mrs. Edith A. Tarkington and the writer researched the Baptist Historical Collection in the Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University, in Winston-Salem.

Carson Lennon Powell was from Fair Bluff, North Carolina, and A. McA. Pittman was from South Carolina. Both were itinerant evangelists working in the Carolinas. Powell went to Algeria as a foreign missionary in 1887 and drowned in the Mediterranean Sea on December 18, 1889. Pittman was active in the ministry for forty-five years and died suddenly on February 9, 1920 near Carlisle, South Carolina.

Most of the information found in the Baptist Historical Collection was in the files of the Biblical Recorder. In the August 1, 1877 issue, it was reported that Powell and Pittman had just completed a three week revival in Hamilton.

In the August 29, 1877 issue the following article appeared: "On last Sunday we closed our meeting in Williamston. Five were added to the church, and we are looking for others. Considering the circumstances this is not discouraging. Williamston is the Jerusalem—the Mecca of Hardshellism in North Carolina. Moreover, during our meeting the pastors of the Methodist and Episcopal churches are said to have visited their members and given strict orders for them not to attend our meetings. Our good

Methodist brother felt duty bound to have preaching at night and wonderful to tell, had communion during the week at night so as to get all the members there. Add to this fact, there were three or four dances in opposition to the meeting. This is the most important field in the state. We are now building our church. Oh, for a foothold in Williamston. Carson L. Powell.’’

In the April 20, 1928 issue of The Enterprise there appeared an article by Rev. C. H. Dickey, then pastor of the Williamston Memorial Baptist Church, in which he said: “50 years ago, the Baptist denomination was very weak in this section, and the church had to fight for its existence from the very beginning.”

In the September 12, 1877 Biblical Recorder was found this article which refers to our own humble beginning: “We are having a very good meeting about eight miles from Williamston in the country. Last winter I preached out there in a Disciple Church (at Cross Roads) and because I preached regeneration before baptism, they refused me the privilege of preaching in their church again. This aroused the people of the neighborhood, and they wished me to go and preach in a schoolhouse a mile from the church which I did, establishing there a regular appointment. Bro. Pittman and I went thither the other day and commenced a meeting and twenty-two have already joined the church, and the interest continues. I baptized five last Monday week, and fifteen last Saturday. Among the members are some of the leading men of the community. They are delighted with the Missionary doctrine. They have become tired of Campbellism and Hardshellism and say that we are just right. They are determined to have a church. We have preached in the piney grove to throngs of people. Tell me not that the Pamlico Association cannot be resurrected. If the board will help Bro. Pittman and myself, we expect to

succeed in planting the truth here in this land of error. C. L. Powell.”

The Pamlico Association had been organized in 1851 and dissolved in 1872. It was composed of churches located between the Neuse and Roanoke Rivers.

It seems apparent that the churches in Williamston, Hamilton and Pine Forest were organized in the 1870's by the itinerant evangelists Powell and Pittman sent from the State Baptist Mission Board.

Chapter III

PINE FOREST BAPTIST CHURCH

According to Paul Bailey's History, our church must have had its actual beginning in the Spring or Summer of 1877. He states that Powell, with his associate, Pittman, came back in the Fall. From this record, we know that a revival was held in the Fall in the old Cross Roads School and then in a field of pine saplings nearby. The writer could find no link between this revival meeting and where the first church was built except an interesting side light related by Mrs. L. A. (Essie) Clark which may or may not have had a bearing on the selection of a site. In 1877, her parents, Robert and Emma Woolard, were living at what we know today as the Joe Wynn farm. When she was a child, her mother told her about a preacher by the name of Pittman who came to this area holding revivals. He made his headquarters here with neighbors, Joseph B. and Emma Peal, who owned the farm now known as the Church Barnhill farm and were the writer's great grandparents. Mrs. Peal had a beautiful black horse and a buggy with a top which was unusual at the time, because most people in this area only had buckboards. She drove Rev. Pittman to visit people while he was staying at her home. She was evidently very interested in the establishment of this new church and became a charter member. Her husband was in poor health at this time. He may have been bedridden part of the time because he died on October 18, 1877. Mrs. Clark's mother also told her of pine saplings being cut near by and of preaching in the open or under a brush arbor. This could have been on the acre of land where the first church was built, which was nearby across Spring Branch from the Peal property.

The deed for the land on which the original church was built is recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds in Book Z, Page 600, and reads as follows:

State of North Carolina

Martin County

Know all men by these present that we Jesse Everett and Ella V. his wife of the County of Martin and State of North Carolina for and in consideration of the sum of One dollar to us in hand paid by J. A. Whitley, Bryant Wynn, Jas. Mobley and Uilie Gurganus, have bargained, alin, sold and conveyed unto J. A. Whitley, Bryant Wynn, Jas. Mobley and Uilie Gurganus of the County of Martin, State of North Carolina the following tract or parcel of land for the purpose of building a Missionary Baptist Church on, lying in Martin County viz: Beginning at a pine in the road leading from Cross Roads to S. P. Everett's, thence a straight line Seventy yards, thence a straight line Seventy yards to a pine near Jasin Tycis line, thence a straight line to the road, thence along said road to the beginning so as to include one acre, to have and to hold unto them the said J. A. Whitley, Bryant Wynn, Jas. Mobley and Uilie Gurganus and to those that may succeed them as members of a Missionary Baptist Church, the above described tract or parcel of land in fee so long as said church shall remain on said land. And the said Jesse Everett and Ella V. his wife for themselves and heirs hereby covenant with the said J. A. Whitley, Bryant Wynn, Jas. Mobley and Uilie Gurganus and their successors as aforesaid to forever warrant and defend the title herein conveyed against the lawful claim or claims of any and all persons whatever. In witness whereof the said Jesse Everett and wife Ella V. have hereunto set their

hands and seals this 8th day of November A. D. 1877.

Read, signed, sealed and delivered in
the presence of John H. Price

Jesse Everett (Seal)

Ella V. Everett (Seal)

This piece of land is on the road from Everetts to Cross Roads on the first farm after crossing Jenkins or Price's Branch, on the left side of the road near the line of the present A. E. James farm. The writer could find no record of when the first building was actually erected; but since the deed is dated November 8, 1877, it is assumed it would be sometime in 1878 before it was completed. This first church built in the pines was called Pine Forest. It must have been active that very first year because delegates were sent to the Tar River Baptist Association which met in Louisburg on October 10-13, 1878. The associational minutes report that: "Letters from Hamilton and Pine Forest Churches were received asking for admission into our body On motion of Elder Pitchford, a committee was appointed to inquire into the church covenant and articles of faith of said churches. The Moderator appointed Elders Newell, Hufham, and W. J. Fulford, as said Committee Through hurry of business the Moderator failed to give the right hand of fellowship to delegates from Hamilton and Pine Forest Churches, which were admitted to our body." Pine Forest was received on Saturday, October 12, 1878.

Charter Members

The only record we have of our charter members are those given in Paul Bailey's History. They are listed below, with a family connection with someone in our community today.

JAMES AUGUSTUS WHITLEY was born November 15,

1841 near Everetts and spent most of his life in this area. He won fame in the Civil War as one of the three soldiers "who advanced the farthest" on July 3, 1863 during General George Pickett's famous charge at the Battle of Gettysburg. He was instrumental in organizing the Masonic Lodge in Robersonville and was installed as its first Master on April 2, 1869. At one time he owned the White Farm just west of Everetts. On June 20, 1879, he was chairman of a committee that met at Everett's Station to work out details of the completion of the S. & R. Railroad from Tarboro to Williamston. He died in Rocky Mount on June 13, 1915, and is buried in the Teel Farm Cemetery. All of his relatives have moved from Martin County.

BRYANT WYNN was grandfather of Mrs. Hubert (Margaret) Clark on her mother's side.

GIB WYNN and GRAY WYNN were brothers of Bryant Wynn.

EMMA PEAL was the second wife of Joseph B. Peal (later Emma Johnson) and great grandmother of Mrs. Helen K. Peel.

PRISSY (PRISCILLA) RAWLS was born in 1803. She was the wife of Hardy Rawls and great grandmother of Mrs. Lula Wynn and Mr. Kader Rawls. She died in 1877 or 1878 and was buried in the church yard at Pine Forest. She had asked to be buried there so she could hear the preaching in the church. In 1890, when the church was moved to Everetts, her body was taken up and moved to the Clark Cemetery back of the Joe Wynn Farm. Her son, Samuel, Mrs. Creasy Barnhill, and others witnessed the removal of the body.

ARTAMECIA PEW was born in 1835 and was the daughter of Prissy and Hardy Rawls. She was the wife of Joe Pew who was killed in the Civil War.

SPELL MOBLEY was the grandfather of Johnnie E.

Mobley Sr. and brother of Drew Mobley.

ELIZA KEEL was the great aunt of Mrs. G. H. Forbes Sr. and sister of Jim Keel.

RUBIN GURGANUS was father of Sam Gurganus and grandfather of Mrs. Selma G. Bunting of Williamston.

BOB WYNN and wife NANCY were grandparents of Ervin Wynn and Mrs. Nancy Williams.

JAMES MOBLEY was the great grandfather of J. E. Mobley Sr. and Mrs. Lula Wynn.

NANCY ROBERSON—There is no record of her except that Bob Wynn's wife above was a Nancy Roberson. They could have been the same person.

No record could be found of the Uilie (or Willie) Gurganus mentioned in the original deed.

It is believed all these people lived in the Everetts or Cross Roads communities.

Chapter IV

THE CHURCH MOVES TO TOWN

Before proceeding further with the history of our church, let us review a few facts about the beginning of our town. The town of Everetts must have been born in the early 1870's. According to Mrs. Claude T. Smith's A History of Robersonville Public Schools "there was a school here in 1875 under Simon Peter Everett. This school building was replaced by 1886." The Simon Peter Everett home was the house presently located behind the Post Office. The village was known as Everett's Station for some years after the railroad was completed through here in 1882. It was incorporated in 1891 and has been known as Everetts since. Our church was the only one in the community until the Everetts Christian Church was organized in 1921.

The records are very limited from 1878 until 1889. In 1879 we had a membership of forty, but in 1880 it dropped back to thirty. No statistics were reported to the association from 1881 to 1887. During this period, Mr. Whitley was in the mercantile business in Hamilton and was a delegate to the association from the Hamilton Church in 1884. On December 22, 1886, he bought the farm where Robert W. (Bobby) Clark now lives and went back to farming. During the next twenty years we see the continued leadership of Mr. Whitley in our church.

The following article appeared in the October 9, 1889 issue of the Biblical Recorder: "On Monday I baptized thirteen happy converts at Leggett's Mill. On Thursday I closed the meeting, having baptized two others, making fifteen, into the mission church at Pine Forest. We are happy that God, as the result of this meeting, not only gives us fifteen by baptism, but also three by restoration, making

eighteen in all. We expect to build a new house of worship at Everett's Station at an early day. Signed, Yours in Christ, Geo. J. Dowell, Rocky Mount, September 28, 1889." Several acknowledgments were found from 1888 to 1890 of contributions made by other churches to the effort at Everetts to build a new church. In the October 29, 1890 issue such a statement was made and added that "contributions were taken on the railroad cars returning from the Associational meeting for the church at Everetts which we are now struggling to build." The association met in 1890 at Greenville and G. W. Andrews and J. A. Whitley were delegates from the Pine Forest Church.

No reason or explanation could be found of why the church was moved in 1890. Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Forbes Sr. both say that his mother, Mrs. Odie Forbes, told them many times that Mr. Whitley was the leader in getting the church moved into town. Since the church had not grown very much at its original location in the country, he and others possibly wanted to move it into the growing little community. Our membership had grown to forty-four in 1889. The associational minutes show that \$306.00 was expended for buildings in 1890 and \$408.53 in 1891, so we can assume the project of rebuilding the church was completed during these two years. The building at Pine Forest was dismantled, the materials were moved to Everetts and reconstructed on the present lot. From the time the church was moved, it was known as the Everetts Baptist Church, although it was still referred to as Pine Forest in some of the local records as late as 1912.

Mrs. Fannie James remembered how the area around the church looked at the turn of the century. The second school erected in Everetts (about 1886) was built on the same location where the old school building stands today. That building, now converted into a dwelling house,

is situated across the ditch west of Taylor Bros. Service Station. It was moved across the road to its present location when the new school was built around 1912. Our church was built a short distance west of the school. Both buildings were surrounded by pine trees, and a narrow path led to the school and church from the Everetts-Robersonville road. At that time, there were no houses close by.

Early Pastors

We have very little record of the first pastors of our church. The first one after the itinerant evangelists was Bythie (or Bithel) Leggett from Bertie County. He paddled a canoe or boat across the Roanoke River and walked to Everetts and served for a number of years.

The first pastor mentioned in the associational minutes was Rev. W. B. Knight. He was paid \$200.00 in 1880 "for services in Martin County. He preached once a month in Hamilton, Jamesville, and Pine Forest." It is doubtful that our church could afford a pastor every year. In fact, according to the associational minutes from year to year, we did not pay a pastor more than \$50.00 a year until 1919 when we advanced to \$75.00. In 1920, the amount jumped to \$300.00, but we were unable to pay over \$1,000.00 until 1947.

The next record of a pastor was in Thomas J. Taylor's History referring to Rev. George J. Dowell: "At the solicitation of Dr. J. D. Hufham, Noah Biggs and R. B. Salsbury he moved into the great mission field of the Tar River Association and located at Hamilton, December 2, 1885, and became missionary pastor at Williamston and Hamilton, also serving from time to time Bethel, Pactolus, and Everetts." We have no other record of a pastor until 1897. Since the Rev. Dowell was in either Hamilton or Williamston until 1898, it may be that he preached for us from time to time during these years.

A complete list of the pastors is given in the Appendix.

During the years from 1890 to 1898 the membership of the church grew from forty-six to a peak of seventy-three; but for some reason there was a gradual decline starting in 1899. The first records of a Sunday School were found in the associational minutes in 1890, and during the period from 1900 to 1920 the Sunday School enrollment was larger than the church membership.

Mrs. Effie Mallory, of Williamston, and Mrs. Pattie Faulkner told of a special service that was held at the church about the year 1902. They remembered a blind preacher and his blind wife who came to Everetts and held a service one night. He did some preaching, but he and his wife mostly sang Fanny Crosby's hymns. They were an elderly couple and were selling bead baskets. Mrs. Mallory believes that this couple was Fanny Crosby and her husband. She was born in 1820 and died in 1915.

Chapter V

A NEW CHURCH IS BUILT AND PAID FOR

In 1920 our membership had dropped to twenty-two, but something happened in 1921. There was a revival in the Spirit of the church and eighteen new members were baptized, making a total of forty-three members. Rev. W. O. Biggs, of Robersonville, was quarter-time pastor. This growth continued until we had a membership of eighty-three in 1925. In the May 19, 1925 issue of *The Enterprise* an article appeared announcing a revival at Everetts Baptist Church beginning May 24. Sunday morning services would be held at the church. Sunday night and all other services of the revival would be held at the high school auditorium. "In view of the fact that the church is not large enough to comfortably seat the crowds expected, the ones in charge of the school building have consented to let the meeting be held there. Preaching by pastor Ford A. Burns. Music directed by Miss Jackie Andrews." Both were from Bethel.

In the Fall of 1925, while Rev. Burns was still pastor, the congregation decided they needed a new church. Paul Bailey's History states: "They, therefore, set about asking for subscriptions with which to build a new building. Many gave until it hurt, and the community, generally, 'rolled up their sleeves' so to speak, and went to work. Mr. C. T. Peal, who has now gone to his reward, was one of the leaders in this great undertaking and gave much of his time and money for this cause. In addition to him, many others who are now living did loyal and good work, and through their efforts the present church stands here today nestled among the waving pines." The building committee was composed

of deacons C. T. Peal and J. S. Ayers together with V. G. Taylor and Joe Wynn.

In the November 24, 1925 issue of *The Enterprise* the following notice appeared: "The Everetts Baptist Church members will give the play entitled 'Deacon Dubbs' Friday night at the school auditorium. The play is being given in order to make up money to pay on the new church which is under construction and nearing completion. Come prepared to laugh, and bring your friends." This play was a big success and was given in several places in the county. Other means were used by individual members to raise money from 1925 until it was paid for. The writer vividly remembers her mother, Mrs. Jesse Keel, crocheting bed spreads, dresser scarfs, and table doilies to be sold for the church.

The new church was built on the same lot, between the old building and Highway No. 90 (now U. S. 64). It was completed in May 1926, and according to the associational minutes was valued at \$7,500.00. There are no records available of the exact cost of the building, but on May 28, 1926, a deed of trust was signed by the trustees to borrow \$3,000.00 from the Martin County Buiding and Loan Association. This money was to be paid back weekly. The trustees were C. T. Peal, J. S. Ayers, Dennis Hardy and Rufus Grimes.

An article in the June 4, 1926 issue of *The Enterprise* states that the first service would be held in the new church on the following Sunday and that a picnic dinner would be served on the grounds. A brief history of the church appears in that article. In the next issue it was stated that a revival started on Monday night after the first service on Sunday, with Rev. J. P. Gulley, of Hamilton, doing the preaching.

The exact date is not known, but about the time the

church moved into the new building, Mr. S. S. Bailey presented the church with a piano, a large Bible for the lectern, and twelve chairs for the choir. He was not a member of the church, but his wife, Mrs. Nancy Parker Bailey, was a faithful leader in the church and a beloved teacher of the junior class of the Sunday School for a number of years.

Soon after the church was established in the new brick building, the old wooden structure was sold to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Parts of the deed are given below: "This deed, made the 27th day of January, 1927, by the trustees of the Everetts Baptist Church to H. A. Cullipher, W. S. Moore, and Mrs. Lossie Barnhill, Trustees of Everetts Methodist Episcopal Church South, for the sum of \$625.00. Said premises shall be used, kept maintained and disposed of as a place of divine worship for the use of the ministry and membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, subject to the discipline, useage and ministerial appointment of said church as from time to time authorized and declared by the General Conference of said church and by the annual conference within." The boundaries are given and the deed states that not over one-half of the Everetts Baptist Church property shall be included.

In the March 29, 1927 issue of The Enterprise, the following article appeared: "The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has purchased a lot and church building in Everetts and will establish a church there. Rev. T. W. Lee, of this place, has been working for the past several weeks in an effort to effect an organization of the first Methodist Church in Everetts, and the first sermon will be delivered within the next month. The church building, formerly occupied by the Baptists of Everetts, is located on the west edge of Everetts on Highway No. 90. The Baptists were forced to abandon the church when their organization

became too large for the building to accommodate it. They are adequately housed in a nice brick church. Rev. Mr. Lee received the deed for the property only last week, and since that time many repairs to the buiding have been made and other details attended to. The first service will be held as soon as the present order for seats is filled. Dates for services in the new church have not yet been arranged, but at least two services each month will be held. Mr. Lee, who will have charge of the church, has been ably assisted by about twenty Methodists in and near Everetts in bringing about the establishment of the church."

According to the July 29, 1927 issue of The Enterprise, the Methodists were to hold their first services in the church at Everetts on Sunday at 8:00 P. M.

Our church did not have a pastor during part of the year 1928. According to the May 11, 1928 issue of The Enterprise, Elder W. B. Harrington was to make his first appearance in Everetts on the following Sunday. He supplied for us several months. He resigned as elder of the Primitive Baptist church in July 1928 and affiliated with the Missionary Baptists.

During this time we were still struggling to pay for the new church. The July 31 issue of The Enterprise stated that we were having an ice cream and chicken salad supper that night at the church.

For some reason the Methodist Episcopal Church did not meet with success in Everetts. The trustees of the church had signed a deed of trust to the Everetts Baptist Church to secure payment of a debt of \$489.86. Since payment was not made on the debt, the old building was sold at public auction on June 22, 1929 to Mrs. C. (Maude) James for the high bid of \$500.00. It was remodeled as a home and Mrs. James and her family lived there until she passed away on March 22, 1963.

In January or February of 1929, the Rev. J. H. (Jim) Smith was called as our pastor. He was a student at Wake Forest College and drove down one Sunday each month until his graduation.

The following article appeared in the June 25, 1929 issue of *The Enterprise*: "Celebrating their 3rd anniversary of the opening of their new church building, Everetts' Baptists last Sunday prepared a splendid program and successfully entertained for pastors and members from other towns. Rev. E. F. Baker, a former pastor, but who is now in charge of a church in Greenville, South Carolina, preached at the morning service while Rev. J. P. Harris, also a former pastor, but now of Beaufort, preached at the 3 o'clock hour. The church's pastor, Rev. J. H. Smith, occupied the pulpit at the evening hour. Dinner was enjoyed on the grounds by the more than three hundred members and visitors present for the day's exercises. At the afternoon service, Messrs. G. H. Forbes, Sr., W. O. Donald and Paul Bailey were ordained as deacons."

Hard Times

Our older members will remember the economic "crash" of October 29, 1929, and the "hard times" that followed. According to Paul Bailey's *History*: "During the great depression, in order to keep from defaulting payments that were required on the church building, Rev. Smith proposed to preach for his 'board' while teaching school in Robersonville. This proposition was quickly taken advantage of, and the payments on the building carried on."

Quoting from a letter the writer received from Rev. Smith in 1972, he said "When the crash came the local financial support was stopped. I had a room with the Ayers family (J. S. Ayers Sr.) and took meals one week with the Ayers, one with the Peals (C. T. Peal), and one with Mrs. Taylor (V. G. Taylor) who was boarding school teachers. This cycle of

eating was a pleasant one. I was glad to use that method in assisting the church to keep up its payments. And no one could ever feel more at home than I did with the dear Ayers family. All of you were more than kind to me in every way."

During the time Rev. Smith was pastor, the older members will recall Rev. David M. Roberts, the evangelist who held revivals here in September of 1929 and again in May of 1931. His eyesight was so bad that he could not read, but he could quote more scripture from the Bible than any other minister we have ever had. After this last revival a baptism was held at Mobley's Mill.

During this ten year period the church had been growing in membership. By 1931 the total was 105. We were gaining in members, but finances were still short. On January 31, 1932, again it was necessary to borrow some money from the Building and Loan, but this time it was only \$800.00.

In March 1932, the church joined with the Christian Church in Union pre-Easter services with visiting preachers for a week. This is just one of the ways that the two churches in the community have cooperated through the years.

Rev. Smith resigned in the Fall of 1932. He had also been pastor in Hamilton in 1931 and 1932. He entered the Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, from which he was graduated in June 1935. Soon afterward he was called to the Memorial Church in Williamston.

Again quoting from his letter he said, "The Everetts Church gave me the beautiful organ you used until you purchased a piano. This organ was given that I might pass it on to my home church near Marion. And while I was at the seminary your grandfather, Brother Charlie Peal, sent me a check for some money and along with it the names of

the contributors. How that did help and how thankful I was for it!"

Through the years, from time to time, pastors had been shared with Hamilton or Robersonville. In 1932 our church formed a field with the Robersonville and Hamilton Baptist Churches with the pastor living in Robersonville. Rev. E. C. Shoe was called to this field in September 1932 and remained until May 1, 1941.

During this period the membership held about the same, but for some reason the Sunday School lost some members. Considering the economic situation in the early thirties, much was accomplished in the church even though the membership stayed about the same. Through the outstanding work and leadership of Rev. Shoe, the church and the one in Robersonville were paid for and dedicated during his pastorate.

The Church Is Paid For

In the Fall of 1935 a movement was started to pay off the balance of the indebtedness against the church. This was accomplished in a few months. In the November 22, 1935 issue of *The Enterprise* the following article was found: "Surely, every member of the Everetts Baptist Church will want to be present Sunday, November 24, at 10:00 a.m., for the program of dedication. It is a great day when the last dollar is paid. 'The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' Some of the former pastors will be present for the occasion. Dr. B. W. Spillman, one of the finest speakers in the state, will appear on the program. Also, we shall have special music by the girls from the Kennedy Home. Dinner will be served on the grounds for all who come. The church and the pastor take great pleasure in extending to all the friends of Everetts and the county a most cordial welcome. All former members are urged to be with us. Our debt is behind us, our face is toward the future.

and our 'God is marching on.'—E. C. Shoe, pastor."

In the November 26 issue, the following article appeared: "Religious activities in this county last Sunday morning were featured by the dedication of two churches and home-coming services at each, giving weighty evidence to the part that religious advancement is keeping step to some extent with the material progress of this county and its people.

"Members and their friends of the Baptist Church met at Everetts to celebrate the dedication of the brick house of worship there, the Rev. B. W. Spillman, of Kinston, delivering the sermon. Following the morning service, dinner was served, the large crowd enjoying the meal in the old friendly picnic style. That afternoon Rev. J. H. Smith, pastor of the Williamston Memorial Baptist Church, and former pastor at Everetts, preached to the large assembly.

"In Hassell, at the same hour, the home folks and a goodly number of visitors were dedicating their comparatively new Christian Church.

"The meetings, described as high spots in the religious work of the county this year, were greatly enjoyed and effected a renewed fellowship among hundreds."

Looking back, we can imagine what a great day November 24, 1935 was for the Everetts Baptist Church! At that time the deacons were: J. S. Ayers, G. H. Forbes, W. O. Donald, R. N. Grimes, D. L. Hardy and Paul Bailey.

Sometime in June 1939, Miss Gracia Halstead of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, painted the picture over the baptistery in our church. She also painted the ones at the Hamilton and Robersonville Baptist Churches. Revivals were held at all three churches during the month, and she gave chalk-talk messages in the churches before the minister's sermons. At the Sunday morning service following the revival in our church, the picture was unveiled

and dedicated to Mr. and Mrs. C. T. Peal.

As stated before, Rev. Shoë left this field in 1941. He went from here to Taylorsville where he died on June 21, 1951. The 1951 minutes of the Roanoke Baptist Association were dedicated to him.

The War Years

For the next few years pastors did not stay very long. Rev. W. O. Andrews came in August 1941 and left October 27, 1942 to go into the service of our country as a chaplain. Even though quite a few of our members served in the Armed Forces during World War II, no lives were lost. Many families in the church were indeed thankful to see their loved ones return home.

Wake Forest students supplied until E. Cleve Wilkie came to the field on April 1, 1943. He and his wife called themselves "two young Greenhorns", but they went to work and made a great contribution to our church. In addition to a general increase in attendance and spirit, Rev. Wilkie remembers an outstanding revival held in the Fall of either 1943 or 1944 that he thinks was the highlight of his two years with us. He did the preaching, there was outstanding special music each night and the house was packed for each service. There were fifteen professions of faith which added greatly to the spirit and life of the church. This revival really got things moving toward the day when the church could "go full time." Rev. Wilkie left July 1, 1945.

Rev. J. R. Everett came to this field in December 1945 and stayed only one year. The Robersonville Baptist Church moved ahead on January 1, 1947 to full time and Rev. Everett became their full time pastor.

Sometime during 1946 or 1947 the first central heat was installed in the church at the expense of Mr. V. G. Taylor. Two gas floor furnaces were installed in the sanctuary with one gas heater in each Sunday School room. This

was quite an improvement over the wood burning heater in the center of the sanctuary.

After Robersonville pulled out of the field, Hamilton and Everetts went to a half-time service with the pastor living in Hamilton. Rev. Elliot R. Stewart came to the field February 1, 1947 and remained until February 1, 1952. During the ministry of Rev. Stewart, the membership of the church and Sunday School grew rapidly—the church membership from 117 to 161 and the Sunday School from 65 to 96. He literally went out into the “highways and hedges” and brought the people in. During the revivals while he was here, the writer remembers how the house was most always packed and also remembers having to sit on the piano stool all the way through one service because there was not a seat left in the building. He passed away from this life in August, 1965.

On December 4, 1947, Messrs. H. M. Ayers, V. G. Taylor, J. G. Forbes and Alton (Dick) Hollis were ordained as deacons. Sometime in 1951 three others were ordained: Clarence Forbes, Joe Beach and Charlie C. Bailey.

In 1951 new pews were installed in the sanctuary. Most of them were paid for by a family or person paying for one pew. At this time, also, Mrs. V. G. Taylor had the rugs installed at her expense, and she and Mrs. Jesse Keel bought the first modern organ for our church.

Chapter VI

A PARSONAGE IS BUILT AND THE SANCTUARY IS IMPROVED

Rev. C. L. Gatling was called to the field in May, 1952. Early in 1953 several members began considering going to full time service and building a parsonage in order that the pastor could reside in the community. Mrs. V. G. Taylor contacted a member of the Barnhill family and asked if they would sell a lot on which to build a parsonage. H. M. Ayers, with the help of G. H. Forbes, Sr. first contacted some of the members to see if they were willing to support a full time pastor. At a church conference in May, 1953, the church voted to go full time as soon as future plans with Hamilton could be worked out. Later, Mrs. J. T. Barnhill, Sr., informed us that to begin our project she would donate a lot near the church on Highway No. 64. The deed for the lot was signed and delivered November 18, 1953. For this act of generosity we shall be eternally grateful to Mrs. Barnhill and her family. She was an active member of the Everetts Christian Church.

Also in November, the Hamilton church went to full time service and Rev. Gatling resigned from Everetts to become full time pastor at Hamilton. For the next twelve months supply pastors from Southeastern Theological Seminary at Wake Forest filled our pulpit. In the Spring of 1954, while in the process of making plans for beginning work on the parsonage, the Rev. J. Harold Coggins began the fund raising by making the first donation in the amount of \$5.00.

The Rev. John Tullock came to Everetts in October, 1954. Soon after he became pastor the following building committee was elected: C. C. Bailey, chairman, Mrs. J. W.

Peel, treasurer, Mrs. Jane Martin Clark, Alton Stalls, Mrs. V. G. Taylor, Mrs. H. M. Ayers, G. H. Forbes, Jr., and J. E. Mobley, Sr.

Rev. Tullock started preaching full time January 2, 1955. On this Sunday the church set a goal of \$9,000.00 for the Building Fund and started working to raise same. On February 6 at a deacons meeting it was decided to begin a program of "The Lord's Acre" to raise money for the building endeavor. The plan was brought before the church and adopted. Several farmers in the church agreed to contribute the proceeds from an acre of corn, soybeans, sweet potatoes or some other crop. This program was continued until the parsonage was built and paid for. Since then we have had an annual Harvest Day in the Fall and contributions go to the Building Fund.

On February 27 the building committee recommended a floor plan which the church voted to accept. On Sunday afternoon, March 13, 1955, the ground breaking was held. Mrs. Barnhill turned the first spade of dirt and our oldest member, Mrs. J. S. Ayers, Sr., turned the second. Several other members took part. On March 27 the church voted to accept the lowest bid which had been submitted, Griffin & Lilley, contractors of Williamston, for \$8,340.00. This amount included six rooms and a bath downstairs, but did not include the wiring and plumbing. Alton Stalls had volunteered to do the wiring and plumbing as part of his donation, and we feel indebted to him for this work. The upstairs was to be finished later.

The contractor started work on April 7, 1955. After construction had been in progress for only a short time, Mrs. Taylor's enthusiasm for the project was manifested by her desire to see the parsonage completed. She asked the church for permission to negotiate with the contractor to change the design of the upstairs and complete it in the

entirety. Even though she had previously made a substantial contribution to the building fund, the two rooms and bath upstairs were completed at her expense.

On September 11 the trustees were authorized to borrow \$3,000.00 from Branch Banking & Trust Company, of Williamston, to make the last payment to the contractor. The note was to be renewed January 1 of each year until paid in full. The actual cost of the original contract bid plus materials bought amounted to \$9,391.92. This figure did not include all the labor donated by Alton Stalls on the wiring and plumbing. Without his untiring help the cost would have been much more. Neither did the above figure include the finishing of the two rooms and bath upstairs by Mrs. Taylor at her expense. She also contributed a floor furnace, a Duo-therm space heater, the light fixtures, and a washing machine. After the Tullocks moved in, she presented them with some living room furniture. Because of her generous donations, the debt on the parsonage was not so great, and the church was indeed grateful to her.

Soon after the building was completed in late September, Rev. Tullock and his family moved in. A special day was planned for October 30. A Homecoming was held in the morning, with a picnic dinner on the grounds, and Open House was held at the parsonage in the afternoon to give everyone in the community and county an opportunity to see what the Everetts Baptists were so thankful for and proud of.

In 1956 the Woman's Missionary Society presented the church with a new Communion Service and two linen table cloths. Also in June 1956, one of our members, Jesse R. Peel, and his father, J. Woolard Peel, rid the church of the honey bees that had been a real problem for years both inside and outside of the church.

Sometime in 1957 or 1958 Thurman Peaks and Alton

Stalls were ordained as deacons.

During the time Rev. Tullock had been our pastor, he had also been a student at the Southeastern Theological Seminary from which he received his Bachelor of Divinity degree on January 17, 1958. The following note of thanks appeared in the January 19 church bulletin: "I want to express my sincere thanks to those of you who attended my graduation and to all of you who would have attended if you had been able. Those who attended were Mr. & Mrs. G. H. Forbes, Sr., Mr. Paul Bailey, Mrs. Reuben Bailey, Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Bailey, Mr. & Mrs. Woolard Peel and Jesse Peel, and my family. I could have never graduated if it had not been for the help of this church. Thank you from the depth of my heart. John Tullock".

Rev. Tullock had driven to Wake Forest every Monday afternoon and returned on Friday, but we knew he would return to Everetts at any time if he were needed. We shall always remember his beautiful voice as he used it for the glory of the Lord and to enrich our services. He resigned as of June 1, 1958 to study at the Divinity School at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. He is now chairman of the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Belmont College, a Baptist school in Nashville. The writer recently received a letter from him in which he included a statement of some of his impressions of the years he spent in Everetts:

"What do I remember about Everetts Baptist Church?

"Preaching there the first time on the Sunday after Hurricane Hazel struck—

"Eating Brunswick Stew for the first time and not being sure as to what it was I was eating—

"Becoming a 'full-time' pastor (preaching every Sunday) for the princely sum of \$1500 per year (it finally

reached \$2200 per year before I left)—

“Wondering how to feed my family on such a slim salary and sharing in the generosity of those many members and friends who replaced a lack of money with vegetables, eggs and meats from their farms and gardens—

“Finding out some years later that a faithful deacon and church treasurer had paid my salary out of his own pocket when church funds were insufficient to do so—

“Sharing the thrill of being able to see the dream of many years for the church come true in the building of a beautiful new parsonage and having the honor of being the first pastor whose family lived in it—

“Wondering what we were going to use for furniture in a huge new house and experiencing the generosity of a great Christian lady who helped us furnish it, and who paid the major part of the utility bills while we lived there—

“Having the joy of seeing eighteen people unite with the church during my ministry and especially of having the privilege of baptizing three husbands and their wives while I served there—

“Everetts Baptist Church, from October, 1954, until June 1, 1958, provided both our home and a means of living for my family and me; a training ground where I could develop my talents for preaching, singing and working with people; and a church whose members and friends became an unforgettable part of my life and the life of my family.”

Rev. Luther G. Cribb was called and preached his first sermon September 7, 1958. He was here about two years and during this time he was also pastor of the West End Baptist Church in Williamston, serving each church half time. In January, 1960, he reentered Southeastern Theological Seminary to finish the requirements for the Bachelor of Divinity. He received this degree on May 13.

In January of 1960, the Fannie Ayers Circle presented

a spun brass vase to the church to be used in the beautification of the sanctuary. Mrs. J. S. Ayers, Sr., presented the vase with these words: "Our circle wishes to give this vase in loving memory of Mrs. Delia Williamson Bailey. She was a charter member of our circle and we feel this is a fitting tribute to her loyalty and faithfulness to our circle as well as the church."

On December 31, 1959 the final payment was made on the note due Branch Banking & Trust Company. The parsonage, four years after completion, was debt free due to the concentrated efforts of each and every member.

The church voted to have a mortgage burning, dedication of the parsonage, and homecoming on April 24, 1960. This was indeed another important milestone of the church. Everetts Baptists had many spiritual and material blessings to be thankful for. A picture was made of the note burning on Sunday morning, the 24th and a copy appeared later in The Enterprise and also the Biblical Recorder.

During the pastorate of Rev. Cribb there were some additions to our membership; but unfortunately, during this time several of our faithful families moved out of the area. The number that moved away really amounted to more than the additions to the church.

In June 1960, Rev. Cribb resigned from both churches to accept a call from a church in South Carolina. The West End Church went to a full time program at this time.

After a few months, Rev. Paul T. Worrell was called as full time pastor. His first service was on November 6, 1960.

On February 11, 1962, J. E. Mobley, Sr. and Dearl Gurganus were ordained as deacons. Paul Williamson (Billy) Bailey had been ordained earlier by a church in Colorado and was also accepted as a new deacon. Rev. John A. Moore brought the message and the charge to the deacons.

In 1963 there was a movement in the church to construct another Sunday school room and some rest rooms. A committee was appointed to work on this matter. Members of the committee were: J. E. Mobley, Sr., Slade R. White, Billy Bailey, Jesse Rogerson and Mrs. J. W. Peel. About this time, the old church building and the lot behind the church were for sale. Since, at that time, there was little land behind the church, the committee recommended that the church negotiate with the James family heirs to purchase the property. They also recommended that the property be purchased before any further plans were made for an addition to the church. These recommendations were approved. It took several months to contact all the heirs and close the deal. On January 23, 1964 we gave the James heirs a cashier's check in the amount of \$2,000.00 for which we received a deed for the original church and land which had been sold to the Methodists in 1927 and which Mrs. James bought at public auction in 1929.

In 1966 the church voted to go ahead with the building plans started in 1963. A representative of the State Sunday School Board met with the committee and advised that the addition be constructed as an annex to the church. The contractor was Mr. Leamon Mobley. The annex with the nursery and two rest rooms was built. The vestibule was added to the front of the church. Celotex was installed on the ceiling of the sanctuary and Sunday school rooms of the church, and the walls were painted all over the church. The cost of this remodeling and new construction was about \$7,250,000. To complete this project \$3,500.00 was borrowed. Payments were to be made in December of each year.

In 1968 it was decided to tear down the old church building. It was in a bad state of repair and it would have been too costly to repair and keep it in good shape for rent.

One of our deacons, Robert W. Whitaker, who helped with the work, remarked that it would have never completely fallen down. It was constructed of heart pine and pegged together, and he and others had some difficulty razing it.

On Easter Sunday, April 6, 1969, it was announced that the two memorial windows that had been installed in the back of the sanctuary were given by the Peaks family in memory of Romona Kay Peaks and the Bailey family in memory of deacon Charlie C. Bailey.

On November, 24, 1969 the final payment of \$1,200.00 was made on the church annex and other improvements. Once again we were out of debt!

In August of 1970 four more memorial windows were installed in the sanctuary. These windows give a warm friendly glow to the sanctuary; and each time we look at them, we are reminded of some of the dear ones who have gone on before us and of the part they played in the history of our church. All of these windows were dedicated on November 15, 1970 at a beautiful memorial service. Several of them were presented to the church by a member of the family and the others were presented by Rev. Cleve Wilkie, a former pastor. Rev. Worrell accepted them for the church, gave a description of each of the symbols or emblems on each window, and made a prayer of dedication. One window is in memory of Romona Kay Peaks, 1949-1967, presented by her family; one is in memory of Charlie C. Bailey, 1896-1968, presented by his family; one is in memory of Mr. & Mrs. J. S. Ayers, presented by Edith A. Tarkington; one is in memory of Delia W. Bailey, 1900-1956, presented by Paul Bailey and family; one is in memory of Joseph Walter Bailey, 1901-1957, presented by Christine Bailey; and one is dedicated to Dorothy Dixon Taylor, 1894-1973 and Van Gilbert Taylor, 1892-1949, presented by Helen Taylor Harris. As part of the same Sunday morning ser-

vice, Floyd Stalls and Robert Whitaker were ordained as deacons. Rev. Cleve Wilkie made the charge to the deacons and to the church.

After ten years of faithful, dedicated service to our church and community, Rev. Worrell had tendered his resignation a few weeks earlier as of December, 1, 1970. He served our church longer than any other pastor. Rev. and Mrs. Worrell will long be remembered for their active service in the community. In a recent letter to the writer, he included a word of appreciation to our church and community: "I am very grateful to the Lord and to the good people of the Everetts Baptist Church and to the citizens of Everetts and surrounding community in general, for the high privilege of living among you and of serving as the pastor of the church for ten years. While it is regretted that more was not accomplished, I feel that they were fruitful and rewarding years. Both my wife and I will always have a very warm place in our hearts for the members of the church and for our friends and neighbors there. You made us feel so very much at home there during those years that we still feel at home whenever it is our privilege to return. We enjoyed a warm, friendly and cooperative spirit among the members of the church and of the town and community. We give thanks to the Lord for every remembrance of you. We continue to remember you in our prayers and covet your prayers in our behalf. P. T. Worrell" He and Mrs. Worrell moved from Everetts to their home town of Seaboard where he has been busy as pastor of several churches in the area. He is now interim pastor of the Seaboard Baptist Church.

Our present pastor, Rev. Allen R. Crouch of Kentucky, and his family moved into the parsonage on March 6, 1971. In August of 1971 central heat and air conditioning were installed in the church at a cost of \$2,949.00. Again we

borrowed \$1,000.00 to pay for this improvement. This debt was paid in full October 21, 1972.

At a special afternoon service on January 21, 1974, Sherwood Carraway and Jesse Gurganus were ordained as deacons. The charge to the church was made by Rev. Thurman Griffin and the charge to the deacons was made by Rev. Harry Fowler. The ordination service was followed by a fellowship supper at the Ruritan Community Building.

In February, 1974, additional improvements were begun on the building. Two new Sunday school rooms were added, a new roof was installed, and the breezeway between the church and annex was enclosed. The men of the church did the inside work on the Sunday school rooms.

The present deacons of the church are: G. H. Forbes, Sr., honorary chairman; J. E. Mobley, Sr., acting chairman, Paul Bailey, H. M. Ayers, Thurman Peaks, Dearl Gurganus, Floyd Stalls, Robert Whitaker, Sherwood Carraway and Jesse Gurganus. The present membership of the church is 162.

Chapter VII

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CHURCH

Sunday School

The first records of a Sunday school in our church were found in the associational minutes in 1890, this being the year the church was moved into town. Mr. J. A. Whitley was superintendent from 1890 until 1902 or 1904. He must have been a dedicated leader to keep the position that many years. During part of that time he was also clerk of the church, from 1900-1907. The Sunday school enrollment was 57 in 1890. It increased to 67 in 1897, but was back down to 56 in 1902.

Mrs. Effie Mallory, of Williamston, a former member, told the writer several interesting stories about the early Sunday school. She was born in 1892 and remembers attending as a little girl, and also that Mr. Gus Whitley was the superintendent. When she was about six to eight years old (1898-1900) she went to Rocky Mount for the first time. The whole Sunday school made an all day train trip to Rocky Mount and had a picnic near the depot. She added that it was an enjoyable day for everyone.

Mrs. Mallory and Mrs. Pattie Faulkner both remember another train trip the Sunday school made. They agreed it was sometime between 1900 and 1905. They are not sure whether Mr. Whitley was still superintendent or whether Dewey (or Deward) Lanier had taken over. The Sunday school rented a private excursion train for an all day trip to Wrightsville Beach. They said nearly everyone in the community, both young and old, went on this trip. Each person had only to pay regular fare. They left

Everetts early in the morning. When they arrived in Wilmington, the train was parked on a siding and everyone got off to "see the sights." Those who had enough money toured the town by trolley. Others took boat trips on the Cape Fear River. They met back at the train at noon and rode to Wrightsville Beach for lunch. Each family carried a picnic basket. Several rooms were rented at the hotel and those wishing to go for a swim dressed in the rooms. This trip was planned to give all the children of the Sunday school a chance to see the ocean—and probably a lot of the old children too! They made the trip back late in the day, arriving in Everetts well after dark.

The Sunday school membership fluctuated until it reached 92 in 1922 and 106 in 1927. There was a slow decline until 1941 when it was down to 32. Mr. G. H. Forbes, Sr., became superintendent in 1940 and remained until 1956—the longest anyone has held this position. He worked hard, with the help of others, to keep the Sunday school going those first few years. The membership began growing again in 1942 and by 1946 it had reached 65. When Rev. E. R. Stewart began work in our field in 1947, the enrollment shot up to 120 in 1948. There has been a slow decline since then and the membership in 1973 was down to 70.

Woman's Missionary Society and Woman's Missionary Union

The first records of a Woman's Missionary Society in our church appears in the 1920 associational minutes. Mrs. C. T. Peal was founder of the organization and its first president, keeping this position until 1924 when Mrs. J. S. Ayers took the office. Those two must be credited with keeping this organization alive. There were seven members in 1923 and twelve in 1924. There is no record of a Sunbeam

Band, but the writer remembers Mrs. Peal having such a group and teaching us to sing "I'll Be A Sunbeam." Even though there were only ten members in 1925, the Martin-Plymouth Division of the association met with our church at their annual session. There were over one hundred women present and they were given lunch. Mrs. Peal, Mrs. Ayers, and Mrs. V. G. Taylor alternated the presidency until 1946. Mrs. John W. Cherry was treasurer part of this time. Mrs. G. H. Forbes, Sr. took over in 1946 as president and worked faithfully until 1960 in that position. At that time the enrollment had grown to twenty-five. Since then several other ladies have served as president including Mrs. D. O. Cherry, Mrs. J. E. Mobley, Sr., Mrs. Haywood Peaks and Mrs. Irving Bullock. Mrs. Freddie Jackson is our president at this time and Mrs. J. E. Mobley Sr. is our Woman's Missionary Union Director.

About the year 1950, while Rev. Stewart was our pastor, Mrs. Stewart helped organize the first Circle of the Woman's Missionary Society. This was the Willie Peal Circle, and most of the members lived on the Bailey Road. The charter members were Mesdames Pattie Forbes, president; Loraine Mobley, secretary; Essie Bailey, Geneva Bullock, Ruth Preston, Viola Bailey, Sis Bullock, and Lizzie Bailey. Joining the Circle later were Mesdames Allie Bullock, Shirley Bailey, Mary Louise Jackson, and Miss Jean Bailey.

The Fannie Ayers Circle was organized October 13, 1955 as the result of Mrs. Tullock's leadership. The charter members were Mesdames Minnie Stalls, chairman; Delia Bailey, secretary and treasurer; Fannie Ayers and Helen Peel. Joining this Circle later were Mesdames Velma Peaks, Bertha Stalls, Edith Tarkington, Evelyn Peaks, Doris Gurganus, Blanche Cherry, Sarah White, Nancy

Hardison, Patricia Bingham, Carol Whitaker and Becky Scherer.

In October 1970 the Woman's Missionary Society's name was changed to Baptist Women.

Our church added three other organizations to the Woman's Missionary Union in the Fall of 1971 under the leadership of Mrs. Crouch: Mission Friends, leader Mrs. Pat Bingham; Girls In Action, leader Mrs. Carol Whitaker; and Acteens, leader Mrs. Crouch. At the present time there are four enrolled in Mission Friends, ten enrolled in Girls In Action and eight enrolled in Acteens.

In 1973 there was a reorganization of the Baptist Women in our church. We now have the Willie Peal Mission Action Group, the Fannie Ayers Bible Study Group, and the Dorothy Taylor Prayer Group. The present enrollment of the Baptist Women is about twenty.

Baptist Young Peoples Union and Baptist Training Union

The first record of the Baptist Young Peoples Union appeared in the 1925 associational minutes. Paul Bailey was president and twenty-six were enrolled. The highest number of members found was in 1929 with forty-one listed. During those years the young people of both churches in town enjoyed meeting in both churches each week. They attended Baptist Young Peoples Union at the Baptist Church on Sunday nights, and the Christian Endeavor at the Christian Church on Monday nights.

According to The Enterprise, the annual meeting of the Baptist Young Peoples Union of the Roanoke Baptist Association was to meet with the Everetts Baptist Church on August 13, 1929. This meeting was to be from 10:00 A.M.

until 4:00 P.M. with a picnic lunch served by our church.

The name of this youth organization was changed about 1936 to Baptist Training Union. The present enrollment is about thirty.

Music

No record could be found of when the first musical instrument, a pump organ, was bought by our church. The oldest known member to play it was one of the charter members, Mrs. Emma Peal (Johnson). Mrs. Effie Mallory played it from time to time when she was a young girl. Mrs. Bert Williams, widow of Dr. John Williams, played it as a bride in 1911 when they first moved to Everetts. Mrs. C. T. Peal took over as organist about 1911 or 1912 and later also played the piano. Through the years the following ladies have been pianist or played the piano from time to time: Mesdames Ida Keel, Edith Tarkington, Helen Peel, Ruth Preston, Beatrice Worrell, Carol Whitaker, Murldean Gurganus and Miss Lois Bailey.

Mrs. Edith Tarkington was organist from 1951, when the first modern organ was purchased, until 1971. Miss Lois Bailey played it from time to time until she left Everetts. Mrs. Crouch is organist at this time.

Through the years the church has at times had an active choir. We now have an adult choir and a youth choir. Mrs. Crouch is directing both of them. Choir robes were purchased late in 1972. Most of them were donated by choir members or someone in their family.

Appendix A

PASTORS

Bithel Leggett (1878-1879)	J. P. Harris (1922-1924)
W. B. Knight (1880)	Ford A. Burns (1925)
Geo. J. Dowell (1885-1893)	W. R. Yokely (1926-1927)
G. L. Merrill (1897-1898)	E. F. Baker (Part of 1928)
B. K. Mason (1899-1900)	J. H. Smith (1929-1932)
J. W. Rose (1901-1902)	E. C. Shoe (1932-1941)
Hocutt (1903)	W. O. Andrews (1941-1942)
S. G. Hartman (1904)	Albert Lamm (1942-1943)
J. T. Eubanks (1905-1906)	E. Cleve Wilkie (1943-1945)
W. G. Hall (1907)	J. R. Everett (1946)
E. C. Andrews (1908)	Elliot R. Stewart (1947-1952)
T. L. Vernon (1909-1913)	C. L. Gatling (1952-1953)
J. L. Rogers (1914)	J. Harold Coggins (1953-1954)
S. F. Bristow (1915-1916)	John Tullock (1954-1958)
R. S. Fountain (1917)	Luther G. Cribb (1958-1960)
T. J. Crisp (1918)	Paul T. Worrell (1960-1970)
W. O. Biggs (1919-1921)	Allen R. Crouch (1971-)

Appendix B **PARTIAL LIST OF PAST** **AND** **PRESENT DEACONS**

C. T. Peal	Joe Beach
J. S. Ayers, Sr.	Charlie C. Bailey
D. L. Hardy	Alton H. Stalls
R. N. Grimes	Thurman K. Peaks
Garland H. Forbes, Sr.	Johnnie E. Mobley, Sr.
W. O. Donald	David D. Gurganus
Paul Bailey	Paul W. (Billy) Bailey
H. M. Ayers	Floyd U. Stalls
Van G. Taylor	Robert W. Whitaker
J. Guy Forbes	Jesse D. Gurganus
Alton Hollis	Sherwood Carraway
Clarence Forbes	

CHURCH CLERKS

J. A. Whitley (1879-1880)
(1881-1886)
David L. Beach (1887-1889)
J. A. Whitley (1900-1906)
P. C. Cahoon (1907-1908)
L. Dew (1909-1910)
J. S. Ayers, Sr. (1911-1928)
C. T. Peal (1929-1933)
Paul Bailey (1934-1958)
William R. Hopkins (1959-)

CHURCH TREASURERS

Van G. Taylor (1931)
C. B. Riddick (1932-1934)
G. H. Forbes, Sr. (1935-1955)
Clarence Forbes (1956-1958)
Floyd Stalls (1959-)

Appendix C

SUPERINTENDENTS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

J. A. Whitley	1890-1902
Dewey Lanier	1903-1904
L. Dew	1905-1907
J. E. Perkins.....	1908
L. Dew.....	1909-1910
C. T. Peal	1911-1912
L. Dew	1913
C. T. Peal.....	1914-1916
L. Andrew Clark	1917
Mrs. C. T. Peal	1918-1920
Rufus Grimes	1921-1922
D. L. Hardy	1923-1924
Paul Bailey.....	1925
D. L. Hardy.....	1926-1928
W. O. Donald.....	1929-1933
Paul Bailey.....	1934-1935
W. O. Donald.....	1936-1939
G. H. Forbes, Sr.....	1940-1956
Dearl Gurganus.....	1957-1960
Paul W. (Billy) Bailey	1961-1962
G. H. Forbes Jr.....	1963-1964
Dearl Gurganus.....	1965-1969
Floyd Stalls	1969-1970
Robert Whitaker.....	1971 -

Appendix D

PRESENT CHURCH MEMBERS

Mr. Carroll Aldridge	Mr. J. Irving Bullock
Miss Janet Asbell	Mrs. Allie W. Bullock
Mr. H. M. Ayers	Mrs. J. R. Bullock
Mrs. Grace R. Ayers	Mrs. Leslie Bullock
Mr. J. S. Ayers Jr.	Mr. Sherwood Carraway
Mr. C. H. Bailey	Mrs. Dolores P. Carraway
Mrs. Shirley T. Bailey	Mrs. Blanche W. Cherry
David Bailey	Miss Gail Cherry
Mrs. Christine H. Bailey	Mr. James E. Cherry
Mrs. Essie B. Bailey	Mrs. John W. Cherry
Mrs. Ethel B. Bailey	Mr. William N. Cherry
Mr. George H. Bailey	Mrs. Lucille C. Cherry
Mr. James W. Bailey	Mrs. Ruby Dell Chesson
Mr. Jerry L. Bailey	Mrs. Miriam B. Coltrain
Mrs. Lizzie B. Bailey	Mrs. Virginia Cox
Mrs. Mary Ann B. Bailey	Mrs. Ella K. Crandell
Mr. Paul Bailey	Mrs. Mary L. Cratt
Mrs. Viola W. Bailey	Johnny Creason
Mrs. Frankie A. Barnhill	Rev. Allen R. Crouch
Mr. Joseph L. Barnhill	Mrs. Bernadein Crouch
Miss Ruby Barnhill	Miss Bethylee Crouch
Mr. Jimmy D. Basnight	Miss Bridgid Crouch
Mr. William A. Biggs	Mrs. Loia I. Curtis
Mrs. Lela H. Biggs	Rendy Edwards
Mr. Leland Bingham	Mr. Frank F. Edwards
Mrs. Patricia P. Bingham	Mrs. Mollie H. Edwards
Mrs. Marjorie Beach	Mr. Clayton Everett
Mr. Bobby S. Bullock	Mrs. Gail M. Everett
Mr. J. Carl Bullock	Mr. Garland H. Forbes Sr.
Mrs. Geneva E. Bullock	Mrs. Pattie B. Forbes
Mr. Andrew E. Bullock	Mrs. Lillian W. Gardner

Mrs. Annie T. Godard	Mrs. Nellie H. Jones
Miss Allie Griffin	Mrs. Virginia R. Kirby
Mr. Joseph F. Griffin	Miss Jeanette Lamb
Mrs. Lena Griffin	Mrs. Faye J. Lane
Miss Linda Griffin	Mrs. Charlie Lassiter
Mr. David D. Gurganus	Mrs. Joyce L. Lee
Mrs. Doris Bowen Gurganus	Mr. Lewis Leggett
Phillip Gurganus	Mrs. Lewis Leggett
Kathryn D. Gurganus	Mrs. Lizzie Leggett
Mr. Jesse D. Gurganus	Miss Fannie B. Mobley
Mrs. Murldean W. Gurganus	Mr. John Mobley
Patricia A. Gurganus	Mr. Johnnie E. Mobley, Sr.
Wanda D. Gurganus	Mrs. Loraine B. Mobley
Jesse Daniel Gurganus Jr.	Mrs. Shirley W. Nicholson
Mr. W. David Gurganus	Mr. Haywood K. Peaks
Barbara Hardison	Mrs. Evelyn W. Peaks
Gary Hardison	Tony Peaks
Mrs. Carolyn B. Hardison	Terry Peaks
Mrs. Jeanette Hardison	Mr. Thurman K. Peaks
Mrs. Nancy S. Hardison	Mrs. Velma W. Peaks
Rose Hardison	Mrs. Kathryn C. Peed
Victor Hardison	Mrs. Helen K. Peel
Mrs. N. G. Harold	Dr. Jesse R. Peel
Mr. Archie Hollis	Mrs. Carolyn C. Phelps
Mrs. Bill Hollis	Mr. Norman Power
Mr. William R. Hopkins	Mrs. Carolyn B. Rawls
Mr. Freddie G. Jackson	Mr. Ellis Rogers
Mrs. Mary Louise W. Jackson	Mrs. Lois Rogers
Freddie G. Jackson Jr.	Mr. Jesse N. Rogerson
Janet E. Jackson	Mrs. Peggy C. Rogerson
Natalie Dawn Jackson	Mrs. Nellie W. Sawyer
Mr. Joseph Ray Jackson	Mr. Albert D. Scherer
Craig Johnson	Mrs. Rebecca B. Scherer
Miss Emily Jolly	

Mrs. Linda B. Sockrider
Mrs. Bertha Stalls
Mr. Floyd U. Stalls
Mrs. Nolie B. Stalls
Mr. Danny Ray Stalls
Mr. Michael W. Stalls
Mrs. Minnie H. Stalls
Ronald P. Stalls
Mr. William A. Stalls
Mrs. Rebecca Sue Stalls
Mrs. Edith A. Tarkington
Mrs. Della Taylor
Mrs. Helen P. Taylor
Mrs. Virginia W. Tucker
Mrs. Dorothy Warren
Mrs. John Webb

Miss Annie Whaley
Mr. Robert W. Whitaker
Mrs. Carol P. Whitaker
Mrs. Linda J. White
Mr. Slade R. White
Mrs. Sarah G. White
Mr. Donnie W. White
Miss Barbara White
Mr. Charlie M. Williams
Mrs. Lavon P. Williams
Charlie M. Williams Jr.
Sherry Williams
Mrs. Elizabeth D. Williams
Mr. Leon E. Williams
Mrs. Lula R. Wynn
Mr. Thurston Wynn

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